DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 281 050 CE 047 020

TITLE Developing Communication Skills. An Ideas Handbook for Work with Mentally Handicapped Adults.
INSTITUTION Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, London (England).
REPORT NO ISBN-0-906509-36-X
PUB DATE Oct 83
NOTE 56p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Basic Education; *Audiolingual Skills; *Communication Skills; Educational Games; Foreign Countries; Learning Activities; Listening Skills; *Mental Retardation; *Reading Skills; Special Education; Speech Skills; *Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS Money; *Numeracy; Time Telling

ABSTRACT

This handbook for basic education tutors of mentally handicapped adults offers ideas and examples for developing the skills of speaking, reading, and writing with understanding. Many of the ideas relate particularly to group work, although most can be adapted for use with individual students. The handbook starts by exploring four broad themes--the coffee break, a visit, a visitor to the group, and learning from experience--and through these themes identifies a range of learning tasks and teaching approaches. These themes show the variety of skills that can be developed from a general topic or activity. Practical examples follow of ways to tackle the teaching of time telling and money handling. Other sections offer ideas on practicing names and addresses, developing social sight vocabulary, developing communication, and developing writing. The final section introduces a number of games that have been found useful both as motivators and in reinforcing learning as well as in providing variety in any learning session. Some further sources of information and background reading are given in the resource list. (YLB)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED281050

# DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

## An ideas handbook for work with mentally handicapped adults

CE047020

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

P Wells

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ALBSU

# FOREWORD

Education provision for mentally handicapped adults takes several forms, is offered in a variety of contexts, for different purposes and covers skills ranging from personal interest-based activities to skills for training or employment. One common underlying thread of much provision is that mentally handicapped adults should be active participants in their own learning, and this also forms the starting point of ALBSU's handbook. Without communication skills and the ability to use them effectively, participation is necessarily limited.

"Developing Communication Skills" is intended to offer ideas and examples to basic education tutors on developing the skills of speaking, reading and writing with understanding. It aims to help tutors in adult basic education classes to extend work and to consider a range of possible learning approaches to include these skills. It is also hoped that staff in adult training centres may find useful suggestions for integrating the development of basic communication skills into other activities on a day to day basis.

The handbook has been produced by a small group of practitioners with experience of work with mentally handicapped adults. Thanks are due to them, and also to two members of ALBSU's staff, Elspeth Cardy who led and co-ordinated the Working Group, and Rosemary Carter who was responsible for its administration.

*Alan Wells*
*Director*
*Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit*

# DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

## An ideas handbook for work with mentally handicapped adults

## CONTENTS


| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction | 3 |
| **THEMES** | |
| The Coffee Break | 6 |
| A Visit | 9 |
| A Visitor to the Group | 13 |
| Learning from Experience | 18 |
| **MONEY AND TIME** Some Practical Examples | |
| Money — Learning to Handle Coins | 22 |
| Telling the Time | 29 |
| **COMMUNICATION SKILLS** | |
| Practising Names and Addresses | 38 |
| Developing Social Sight Vocabulary | 40 |
| Developing Communication | 42 |
| Developing Writing | 45 |
| **USING GAMES** | |
| Using Games | 48 |
| Resources | 55 |

# MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

**Anne Chappel,** Adult Literacy and Basic Education Field Worker, Leeds LEA.

**Karen Davies,** Organiser for Adult Basic Education, North Shropshire, Shropshire LEA.

**Veronica Gardiner,** County Co-ordinator for Adult Basic Education, Somerset LEA.

**Gillian Harrington,** Tutor-Co-ordinator for Adult Literacy, Hounslow LEA.

**Jenny Leonard,** Co-ordinator for Adult Continuing Education (ACE), Gosport and Fareham, Hampshire LEA.

©The Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit,
Kingsbourne House, 229-231 High Holborn, London WC1V 7DA.
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be photocopied recorded or otherwise reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means without the prior permission of the copyright owner.
Published October 1983
ISBN 0 906509 36 X
Design: Studio 21

# INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended for basic education tutors working with mentally handicapped adults. Since the needs of mentally handicapped people and the levels at which they work are very varied, it does not attempt to offer specific learning material, but rather to suggest a range of ideas which tutors can adapt to the needs of students. The handbook focuses on communication skills, acknowledging that for most mentally handicapped adults the skills of listening, understanding and speaking are as important as the skills of reading and writing. Many of the ideas suggested relate particularly to group work, although most of them can also be adapted and developed for use with an individual student.

"Developing Communication Skills" starts by exploring four broad themes:-

- the coffee break
- a visit
- a visitor to the group
- learning from experience

and through these themes, identifies a range of learning tasks and teaching approaches. These themes aim to show the variety of skills that can be developed from a general topic or activity, and the scope this offers for oral communication, literacy and numeracy work.

This is followed by some practical examples of ways to tackle the teaching of *time* and *money,* both of which are fundamental to everyday living. The section on money concentrates on an introduction to learning to handle coins and some very basic number skills. Other sections offer ideas on:

- practising names and addresses
- developing social sight vocabulary
- developing communication
- developing writing

The final section in the book introduces a number of games that have been found useful both as motivators and in reinforcing learning, as well as in providing useful variety in any learning session.

Finally, some further sources of information and background reading are given in the resource list.

Perhaps the most important points to remember are to pace the work to suit the student, and to introduce variety of activity into any learning session. It is not intended, however, that anyone should work through all the ideas offered on any topic or theme. Rather, the range of ideas should enable tutors to select activities according to the needs and abilities of the student, and this may mean using only very small sections of material at any one time.

# THEMES

THE COFFEE BREAK

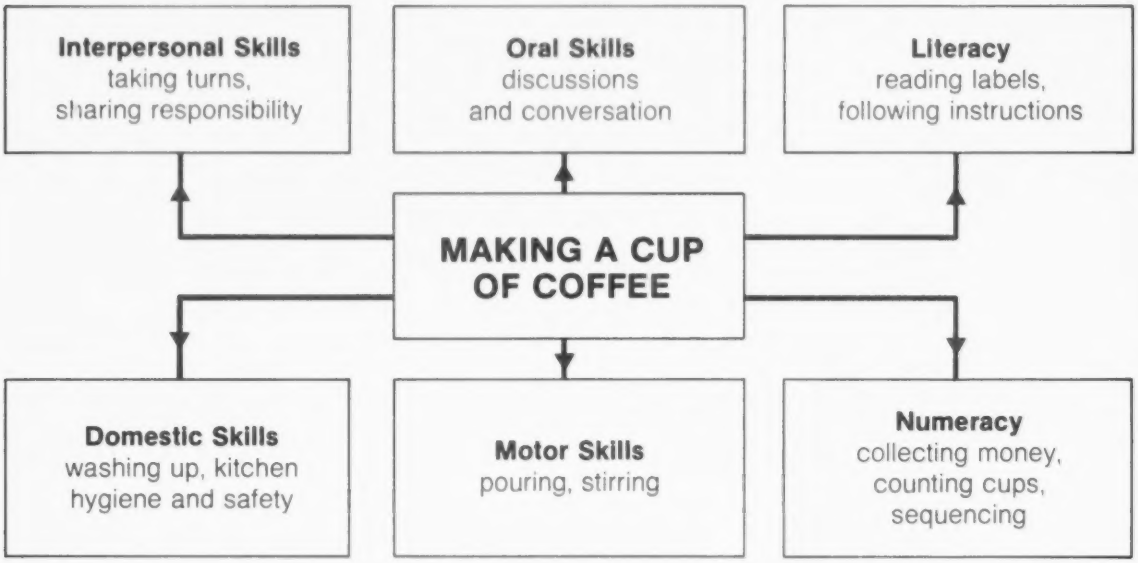
A VISIT

A VISITOR TO THE GROUP

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

# THE COFFEE BREAK

Most groups have a coffee break halfway through the session and this can be a fruitful experience for learning. Look at some of the skills which may arise:




If you have to go to a cafeteria or use a vending machine, then your scope may be limited. However, cafeterias can be good places to start learning about menus, prices, eating out etc., and vending machines demand a sight reading ability of their very own! Here are some suggestions for developing communication skills through the coffee break where the group takes responsibility for making the coffee. Some skills can be developed further if you wish.

**Skills involved**

☐ discussion and social skills ☐ forward planning for group activities

*How they can be developed*

The group decides a price for the coffee — this involves discussing what can be afforded, what profit can be made, whether profits can be saved up for outings, or for equipment for the group. The students will have to decide how to share the responsibility for making coffee and clearing up, collecting the money, etc. Discussing who works well with whom and who is practical introduces the idea of taking turns and responsibility.

*Further Development*

☐ rotas for making coffee ☐ chart for collecting money

**Skills**

☐ numeracy ☐ shopping ☐ saving

*How they can be developed*

Coffee, sugar and other provisions will have to be bought, prices and amounts estimated, shopping lists made.

Collecting the money will involve recognising coins, adding up and giving change. The member of the group responsible for the money will need to keep accounts and see receipts. The group could open a special bank account to save the profits.

---

*Further Development*

☐ supermarket shopping ☐ using the post office

☐ comparing prices ☐ banking

---

## Time

The timing of the coffee break can provide an opportunity to introduce and reinforce awareness of time.

**Chart**

Start preparing at:

quarter to 8

7.45 p.m.

Coffee break at:

Eight o'clock

8.00 p.m.

---

*Further Development*

☐ using digital watches, 24 hour clock

---

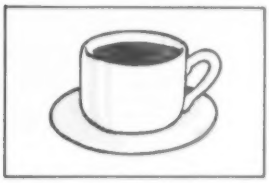
## Reading and Writing

Students making coffee will need to recognise labels and read instructions. This could be a basis for a language experience approach to reading.

- Write the sequence of steps in making a cup of tea or coffee on strips of cards, for the students to read and put in the appropriate order.
- Make reading material based on the preferences of the groups, eg:

> Janice likes coffee with milk and no sugar.
>
> John likes tea with milk and two sugars.

- Simple workcards could ask students to match pictures to words, eg:



cup

spoon

- Look for words in advertisements or match words in upper case letters from labels and adverts to the same words in lower case letters.

## Number

Managing the coffee break provides practical experience in simple calculations, estimating and measuring:

- how many spoonfuls of coffee are there in a jar
- how many cups of coffee can be made with a pint of water
- how many cups need to be put out if 6 people want coffee and 2 people want tea?

## Other skills

There are a number of other topics which can be generated from the coffee break theme, including:

- hygiene in the home
- first aid and accidents
- kitchen safety
- preparing hot and cold drinks

During the coffee break, a number of social skills can be developed, including perhaps passing drinks around, making sure everyone has a seat, making sure no-one is left out of the conversation (or is hogging it!), clearing up afterwards, etc.

The section on developing communication offers further suggestions for stimulating discussion.

# A VISIT

Many trips are regarded as time fillers for students and teachers at the end of a term or as a "treat". Planned carefully with your students a trip can become a valuable learning experience.

You will probably use different types of visit for different purposes, for example, not all trips will benefit from extensive planning and sometimes you will want to make a visit for pure enjoyment.

In this example a wide range of skills have been drawn out, some of which might be useful for some visits. However, beware of trying to cover them all at once, or the visit may never take place!

## Making an appropriate choice

Encourage the group to choose where to go and discuss fully the practicalities of the group's choice. For example, if the group selects a trip to Paris don't just reject the suggestion out of hand, but explore it with them — ask open-ended questions, as this is where the learning process starts.

Ask the group "How long would it take us to get to Paris?"; "How long have we got?"; "How much would it cost?"; "How much money have we got?"

The process is laborious, but stimulates group members to think the problems through.

The skill on the tutor's part lies in selecting the questions and through knowing your students, you can select "useful" questions which will stimulate answers relating to their personal needs. A student who has little concept of time, for example, could be asked questions relating solely to this aspect of the trip. Through asking "How long do you think it would take to get to Paris?" you may evoke responses which will make it clear to the student whether a visit to Paris is an appropriate choice ... or not.

Here are some examples of questions you can't answer "yes" or "no" to:

- ☐ Where will we go?
- ☐ How will we get there?
- ☐ How long do you think it will take?
- ☐ How much will the bus/train fare cost?
- ☐ Where do we get time-tables from?
- ☐ What do we do on the bus?
- ☐ How do we pay?
- ☐ How do we know where to get off?
- ☐ What do we do if we're not sure?
- ☐ What sort of food shall we take?
- ☐ Will there be anywhere to eat?
- ☐ What will you do if you get lost?
- ☐ What dangers might there be?
- ☐ What can you afford to buy from the menu?

And afterwards:

- ☐ What made you sad?
- ☐ What made you laugh?
- ☐ What was the best thing about the trip?
- ☐ What was the worst thing about the trip?

## Reinforcement

With slow learners it may be necessary to repeat, several times, the answers they give you and the conclusions you draw, ie "Yes it would take a whole day to get to Paris wouldn't it?"

Don't be concerned if planning the trip takes a long time by this method. *Remember the object is for the group members to learn, not to get the trip over and done with as quickly as possible.*

The approach suggested can be applied to any visit be it for half an hour or half a day. A lot of skills are covered in this section, but remember that it is important to pick out those which are relevant to the lives and needs of your students.

## Talking it through

| Discussion | Skills | Practical Activities |
|---|---|---|
| Before the visit, plan the trip with the students. This will involve decision making about where to go. | Conversational skills, i.e. talking, listening, giving opinions, etc. Thinking skills, i.e. forming opinions, making judgements, puzzling things out, etc. | Writing letters<br>Using the telephone<br>Reading a map<br>Using a timetable<br>Making a scrapbook<br>Making lists<br>Drawing<br>Research<br>Reading Books. |

## Preparing for the trip

| Discussion | Skills | Practical Activities |
|---|---|---|
| Discuss the use of public transport, eating out, clothing, appropriate behaviour. | Using money<br>Change/identifying coins<br>Asking directions<br>Left and right<br>Green-Cross Code<br>Choosing from a menu<br>Ordering food<br>Table manners<br>Choosing and buying food for a packed lunch. | Social sight vocabulary<br>Use of money (games)<br>Role-play (cafe, directions)<br>Looking at appropriate clothes (with a catalogue)<br>Preparing a packed lunch. |

## Getting there

**Discussion**

Discuss what you're doing as you're doing it, what you see from the window, the weather, the route.

**Skills**

Conversational skills

Using public transport

Appropriate behaviour.

**Practical Activities**

Checking everything you have with you

Using money, buying tickets.

## While you're there

**Discussion**

Talking about getting there — anticipation

Talking about the place visited

What will you write in your scrapbook?

Splitting into smaller groups

Getting lost and meeting up

What time must we leave?

**Skills**

Signs

Observation

Finding your way around

Telling the time

Concept of time.

**Practical Activities**

Looking around

Drawing

Buying — drinks, souvenirs, etc

Finding a clock

Telling the time.

## Follow up

**Discussion**

Discussing experiences

Discussing the trip.

**Skills**

Writing

Reading

Communicating.

**Practical Activities**

Finishing scrapbook

Mounting pictures

Listing useful information for future trips

Recording an account of the visit on tape or in writing.

Having a plan may not work in practice; it is useful to bear in mind the educational aims of the trip but unnecessary to stick rigidly to the plan. When writing about the trip and discussing it, you may be surprised to find that the most vivid memories are totally unrelated to the place you have visited.

## Some other ideas

When planning trips don't ignore what's round the corner — visits need not always be to expensive and distant places. See what is on your doorstep — a phone call or letter beforehand will usually ensure a warm reception and a behind-the-scenes look. If you are thinking of visiting the shops they will usually tell you the busy times to avoid.

Here are some ideas for a visit out:

- ☐ a class at an education centre, or a behind the scenes look at the photocopying room
- ☐ a chinese take-away, chip shop, cafe, or pub
- ☐ a launderette
- ☐ a supermarket, market or do-it-yourself store, or large department store
- ☐ an auction, fete or jumble sale
- ☐ a school, or playgroup
- ☐ a library or town hall
- ☐ a sports centre, or swimming pool
- ☐ a cinema
- ☐ a bus or railway station, police or fire station
- ☐ just look around at shop windows reading the information there
- ☐ walk around having a look at street names, house names, and numbers
- ☐ local factories, printers, telephone exchange, local newspaper printers
- ☐ the local football ground
- ☐ a job centre
- ☐ a post office, chemist, butcher
- ☐ a bakery or laundry
- ☐ the postal sorting station

Don't forget a thank you card or letter afterwards perhaps signed by all the group.

# A VISITOR TO THE GROUP

Inviting a visitor to the group can be a useful way of offering a wide range of experiences and developing social skills. It gives the group the opportunity to act as hosts and to think practically about how to make other people welcome and feel at ease.

## Planning Ahead

Draw up a list of students' suggestions about who to invite to visit the group. Don't expect off-the-cuff ideas and be prepared to add to the list each week.

Record the names of students alongside their suggested visitor, by getting the group to make a chart.

**NOTICE BOARD**

**SUGGESTIONS FOR VISITOR**

| | |
|---|---|
| MARY | Someone to talk about the library |
| JACKIE | A well-known name from local radio station |
| PETER | Speedway racing marshal or a competitor |
| SYLVIA | Someone to talk about taking care of our teeth, or taking photographs |
| JOHN | Someone good at making fancy cakes. |
| JEAN | Someone to help make Christmas decorations. |

## The Host

Give each student an opportunity to act as host when their visitor arrives. Using role play gives students practice in playing host. Let them observe and discuss what they need. List the attributes of a good host: kind, welcoming, attentive, prepared (whatever the students suggest).

Over the page are two approaches to receiving a visitor. The group might enjoy discussing the relative merits of each:

**A.**

HOST: Hello, are you Mr Smith?

MR SMITH: Yes — how do you do.
I'll show you the way to our room.

HOST: Let me take your coat.

MR SMITH: Thank you.

HOST: Will you have a cup of tea?

MR SMITH: Thank you. I take milk but no sugar.

HOST: Did you find us easily?

MR SMITH: Yes thanks, your map was very clear.

HOST: Will you please check that there is everything you need.

MR SMITH: That seems fine — perhaps an extra table would be helpful.

***The class arrives . . .***

HOST: Good evening everyone. I should like to introduce Mr Smith who has come to tell us about police horses. His job is to train them . . . Let me introduce everyone — Mike, Sheila, John . . .

**B.**

MR SMITH: Hello, I'm Mr Smith.

HOST: Oh!

MR SMITH: I think I'm expected . . .
Will you please tell me where to put my coat?

MR SMITH: Shall I sit here?

HOST: If you like.

MR SMITH: Could I have another table please?

HOST: Yes — you can get the one in the corner if you want.

MR SMITH: My name is Peter Smith. I work in the Police Force. I help to train the horses . . .
Tell me your names please.

GROUP: I'm Sheila! . . . I'm Mike! . . . I'm John . . .

MR SMITH: Oh please! . . . not all at once!

## Letter Writing

Write a letter of invitation to the person chosen giving specific information. Use the same basic format each time, so a student can add the appropriate details:

.....the time of the session

.....dates to choose from

.....number in group

.....telephone number

.....request for information about apparatus needed.

Help the host student to address the envelope, and to enclose a map.

Visit the Post Office to buy stamps and post the letter.

The host should find out as much as possible about the visitor.

- ☐ what his or her name is
- ☐ where he or she comes from
- ☐ what he or she will need
- ☐ what time he or she will arrive.

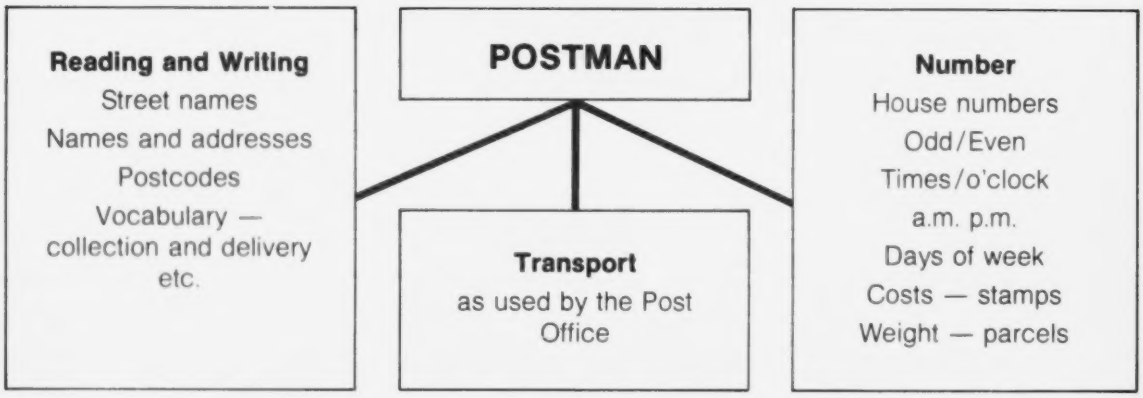
## Receiving the visitor

The group will need to arrange to arrive at the centre in time to meet the visitor and prepare the room and equipment needed. Members of the group can take responsibility for different tasks; deciding on what needs to be done and who does what is an essential part of the planning process.

## Teaching points

Considerable benefit can be gained from a pre-session meeting between the group teacher and visitor to explore the points which can usefully be brought out in the talk, demonstration or exhibition, and can be developed in the following discussion and followed up in subsequent teaching sessions or visits. Visitors should be encouraged to introduce a variety of learning experiences and to stimulate as many senses as possible.

## Inviting the postman




**Materials**
Posters
Leaflets
Scales
Geared clock
Paper and string

**Practical Activity**
Wrapping parcels

**OUR NEXT VISITOR**

is .....

from .....

Topic .....

will need .....

date and time .....

## During the visit

- ☐ Take turns to ask questions.
- ☐ Record the session on tape or ask someone to write notes as an aid to memory. Remember to thank the visitor at the end.

## After the visit

- ☐ Report how it went to members of the group who couldn't be there.
- ☐ Discuss what has been learned.
- ☐ Give the students a questionnaire or have a quiz session, based on the content of the visitor's talk.
- ☐ Write a joint thank you letter from the group.

## People to Invite

These are some suggestions of people to invite. The group might think of others:

*Self-care*

Doctor, Dentist, Health Visitor, Optician, Chemist, Yoga/Keep-fit Teacher, Hairdresser, First Aid Teacher, Swimming Coach.

*Community service*

Fireman, Postman, Librarian, Museum guide, Cinema Manager, Shop Keeper, Laundrette Manager, Nursery Teacher, Staff of local adult education centre.

*Hobbies/Interests*

Local people with interesting hobbies such as bird watching, fishing, keeping an aquarium, railway enthusiast, sports club leader, local historian.

# LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

Everyone has a range of experience to draw on, and it is important to give mentally handicapped students the opportunity to exchange their experiences with others. How we feel about ourselves, our families, etc is important to us, and yet many mentally handicapped adults do not value themselves or their experience.

Time spent on helping students to exchange ideas and experience is as valuable as developing skills, and this topic can be used to draw out this experience. The students (and volunteers and tutors) are the main resource, providing a ready souce of material for student-centred learning which everyone in the group can share.

The following suggestions may provide some suitable ideas for your group. Allow the students plenty of *time* – it is unlikely that you would include more than one or two of these ideas in any session.

| **Topic Area** | **Extension Ideas** |
|---|---|
| Who I am | Help the students to gain a sense of their own place in time, by looking at old photographs, family albums, birth and death certificates of the family. |
| The Family - place in the family | Family photographs can be brought in to make a collage of photos of grandparents, parents, self.<br><br>Use birthday cards and calendars to introduce concepts of older and younger.<br><br>Make a family tree. This can include bringing in names, addresses, calculating ages, awareness of kinship and of the extended family<br><br>Look at other family trees. Well-known families can provide a focus for discussion and favourite photographs are easy to find in magazines and newspapers<br><br>Students might enjoy making their own personal scrapbook with illustrations, photographs, captions, sketches, etc.<br><br>You can make and play your own Happy Families Game, (making your own cards using family photographs).<br><br>Members of the family might be invited in, for example grand-parents, or a visit could be made to a playgroup or nursery to see young members of a family. |
| Nationality | Talk about where you live or where you were born. Use a large wall map and pins to show the students' and tutors' homes. A world map or globe may also be useful and can be used to talk about members of the family who have moved away or emigrated. |

| Topic Area | Extension Ideas |
|---|---|
| How I appear - height, weight, age, appearance | Take in a large mirror (magnified one side perhaps) to start discussions on how people look: colour of hair and eyes, etc. Get verbal descriptions, tape them, use them in a quiz. You could write out the descriptions, ask students to paint self portraits, and make a wall display.<br><br>Try measuring and weighing to find out who is taller/smaller/heavier/lighter.<br><br>Use simple forms to practise filling in personal details. |
| What I like - to eat, wear, hear, remember | Ask the group to describe favourite meals or bring in their favourite recipes.<br><br>Talk about clothes, favourite colours, styles. Bring in catalogues, magazines and fashion articles. Discuss sizes of clothes, find out if all the students know their size, take measurements.<br><br>Talk about favourite pieces of music.<br><br>Discuss memories, for example, a favourite meal or holiday, a childhood event or day out.<br><br>Use writing or drama to describe "my best/worst day or experience". |
| Who I like | Discuss relationships, girl/boy friends, friends. Talk about why you like someone — because they are handsome/beautiful/smart/funny/easy going/happy? Why do people like you? |
| Interests, hobbies skills | Allow time for students to prepare short talks on their hobbies or interests. They may like to tape-record these, and transcriptions could be used for various literacy activities.<br><br>There may be opportunities to develop students' interests by having a go at a few activities over a period of time e.g. art, pottery, cookery, woodwork, sketching, plays, poems or music.<br><br>The group may like to start collections of stamps, silver paper, etc, for charities. |
| Where I work | Talk about staff at the centre or workplace. Keep a diary of what happens at work or draw up a timetable for the week.<br><br>Discuss jobs and what they involve. This could be extended to a closer look at their own work and the skills they use. |

# MONEY AND TIME

## SOME PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

MONEY – LEARNING TO HANDLE COINS

TELLING THE TIME

# MONEY–LEARNING TO HANDLE COINS

When teaching money don't fall into the trap of getting students to work through pages of sums. Concepts are learned through practical experience, through doing things, through handling money and it's much more useful to learn in this way. For everyday living, you need relatively few mathematical skills, although judgements in the use of money and the estimation of time are essential.

Language plays an important part in thinking, classifying, categorising and exchanging ideas and students may be unfamiliar with the language we use (e.g. "more than", "less than", "above", "below"). It is often difficult to assess the extent to which a student has grasped a concept, but it is only through observation of students' activities and asking relevant questions (not by giving tests) that it can be decided to what extent, if at all, a student is beginning to develop a concept.

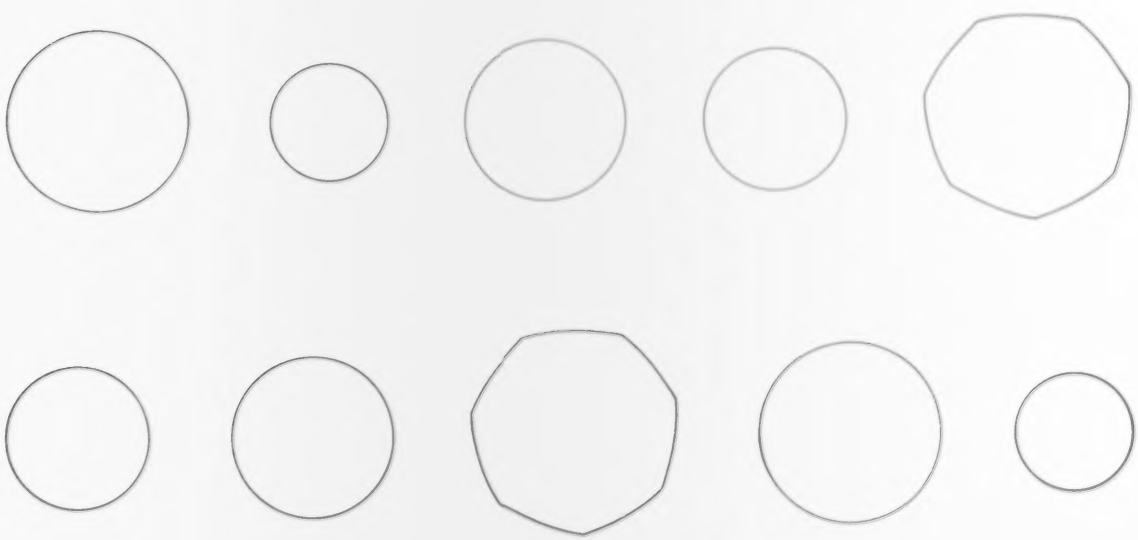
This section contains some ideas for use in a group to initiate and supplement everyday activities. Make sure that these exercises lead on to real situations where money is exchanged.

Coins only begin to make sense when a student has grasped the idea of *exchange:*

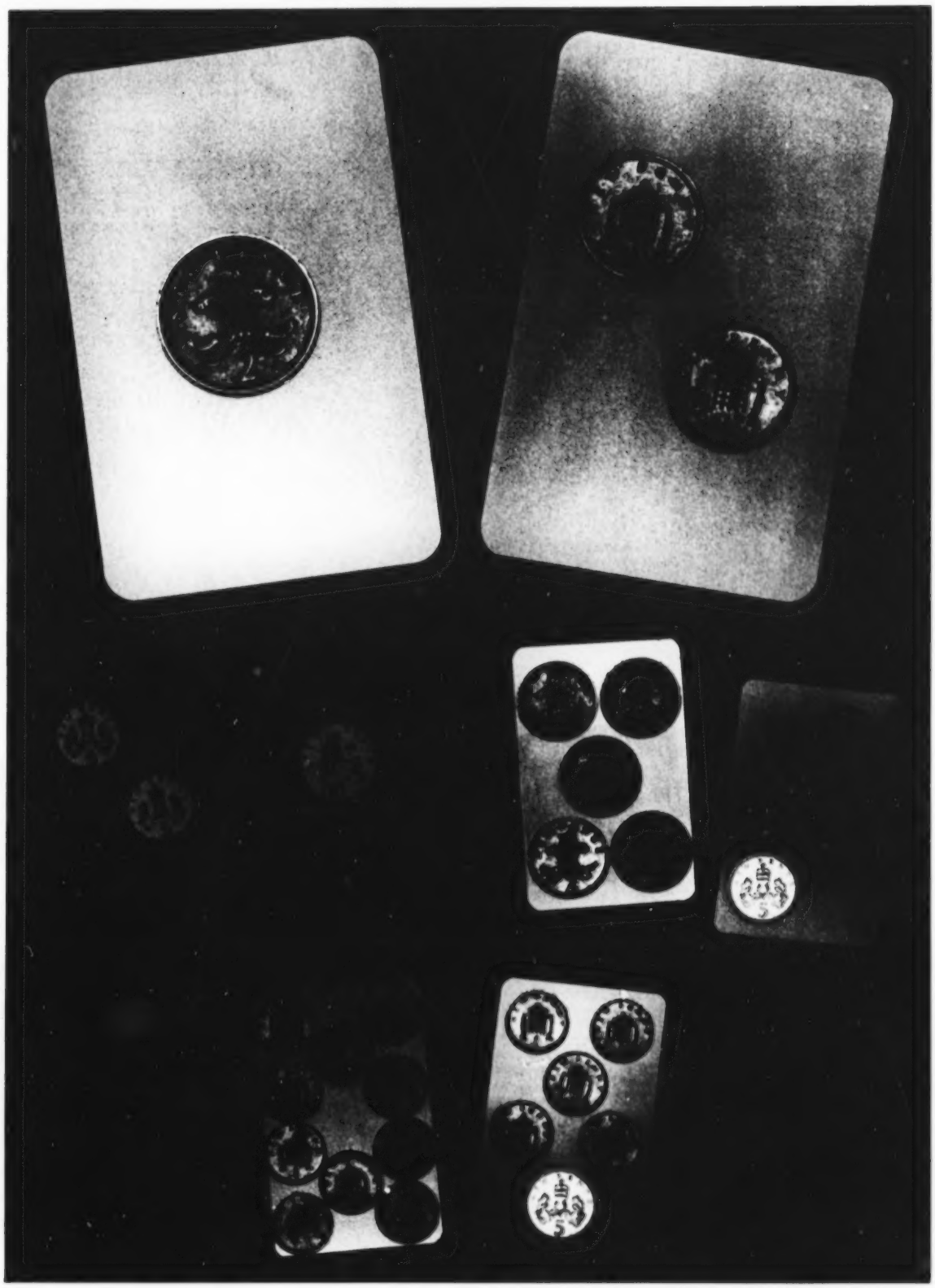
- ☐ Give each student a 2p coin and discuss its appearance. If necessary point out the figure 2. Then hand each student two 1p coins. Discuss the appearance of the coins, point out if necessary the figure 1. Compare these coins with the 2p coin. Explain that two 1p coins are worth the same as one 2p coin. Give them practice in exchanging the coins with you and each other. Help them realise that one 5p coin is worth the same as five 1p coins in the same way and vice versa.

## Matching Exercises

- ☐ Place real coins in outlines.
- ☐ Ask students to map across between like coins.
- ☐ If necessary encourage students to place coins one on top of the other or side by side to check.



- Make a simple card game by glueing coin stickers on to blank cards. The student then practises matching pairs of equal value.



- As students become more adept at exchanging coins of the same value, extend the set of money cards to be used in Pelmanism, Money Fish, Snap, etc.

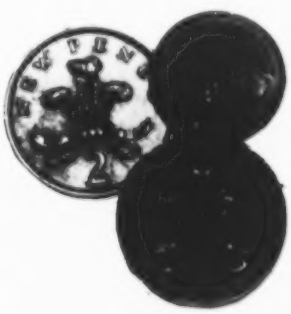
## Equivalence

- Using goods with price tags helps students to decide what coin should be offered in exchange. Begin with goods priced at the face value of individual coins. Ask students to offer real coins and record with gummed paper coins.

= Price 5p =

= Price 10p =

- Extend this exercise to asking for a number of coins which are *worth the same.*

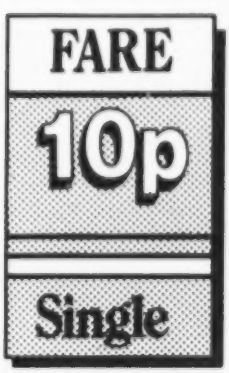


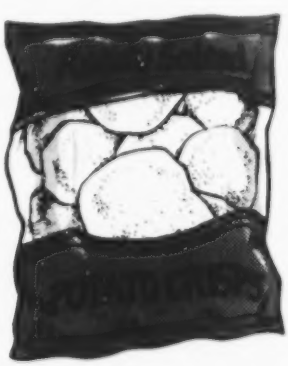
## Understanding the value of money

The understanding of money and its value in relation to goods and services paid for is important.

- Encourage students to make a *Money Scrapbook* either as a group or individually. Allocate a double page for each coin. Begin with whichever you feel is most meaningful — probably 10p.
- Collect empty packets, wrappers or pictures of goods or bills.

  e.g. **What I bought for 10p:**



## More or less?

You have 10p

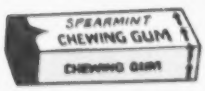
- ☐ Which goods can you buy and which goods cost too much?
- ☐ Use the number strip to check
- ☐ Put a ring around those you can buy.

15p

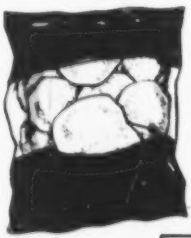
7p

9p

20p




8p



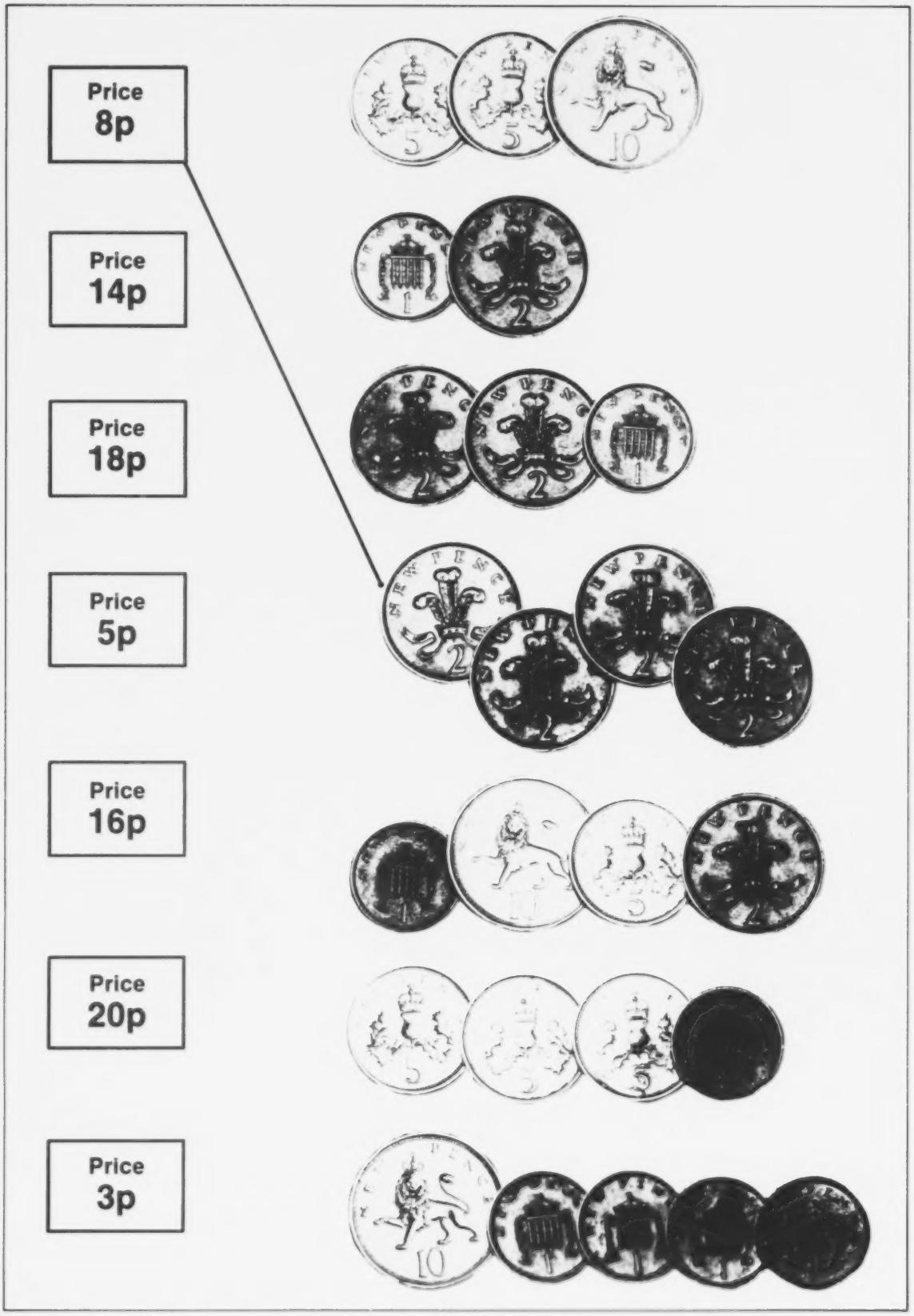
10p

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | *Costs* | *Can I buy it with 10p?* | *More than 10 or less?* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chocolate | 15p | ✗ | More |
| Matches | 7p | ✓ | Less |
| Pencil | 9p | | |
| Crisps | 10p | | |
| Coke | 20p | | |
| Chewing Gum | 8p | | |

## Handling money up to 20p

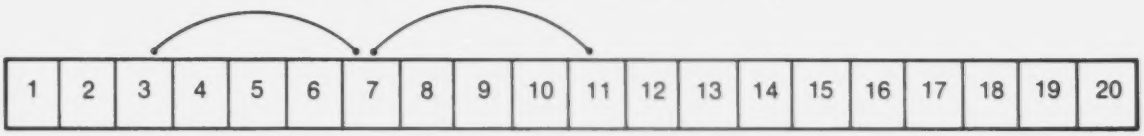
□ Here is an example of a simple workcard to make:



## Counting on

- Use a number line to find totals up to 20.
  e.g.

3p and 4p and 4p makes 11p




- Reinforce with practice using actual coins.
- When students are familiar with counting in ones, practice the concept of counting in 10's.

## Rounding Up

- Students must learn what to offer to be sure of covering the cost of a purchase.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |

10
20
30
40

- The use of a hundred square should help students to grasp the idea of "counting on" to the next ten before using real coins.
- Avoid introducing the fifty pence coin until the students can handle ten pence coins easily.
- Introduce and practise with some practical examples of various transactions.
  e.g.

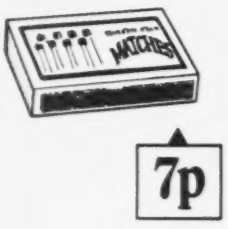
**FARE 26p**

**PAID 30p**

## Change

Rounding up leads to an understanding of change

- What will your change be from 50p if you buy one of these?




You can move on from these activities to practise with larger sums of money, for example:

- Practise exchanging a £1 coin for 10p coins.
- Repeat shopping exercises using an amount greater than £1.
- Introduce £5 note and give practice in handling more difficult amounts e.g. £6.40, £8.70, etc.
- Collect pictures from magazines to build a catalogue. Fix a price for each item and an identifying letter.
- Invite members of the group to make out orders offering the correct value of coins.
- Collect actual menus and help students to work out what they can afford to buy with a given sum.
- Discuss the use of a bank. How long will it take to save a given sum at 50p weekly?
- Use every opportunity to introduce the vocabulary related to the idea of exchange.

cost buy price sell less
afford how much? amount sale more
cheapest expensive bill receipt too much
not enough cheaper than

More able students can learn how to work with written numbers and eventually begin to deal with bills and budgeting.

# TELLING THE TIME

Some students will own digital watches while others may be more familiar with the traditional clockface. It is important that they learn to tell the time by the most immediately relevant method, so before starting to teach a student to tell the time, find out what method is most familiar, and base your teaching on that.

Below are some ideas based on the traditional clockface, most of which can be adapted for use with the digital clock.

## The hours

- ☐ Make a series of cards using a clock stamp and draw in the hands to show the hours. Demonstrate using a real clock.
- ☐ Give students a blank clock to fill in the numbers.
- ☐ Use cards for visual matching, individual practice and for oral exercises.

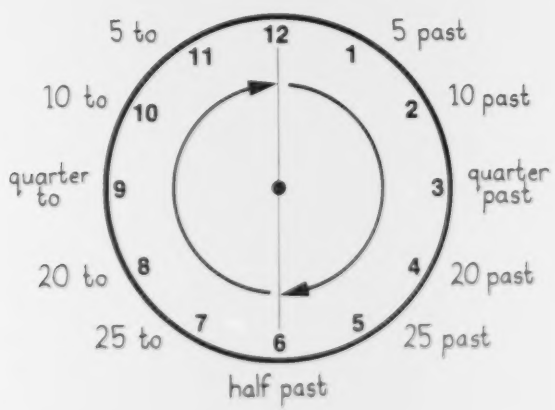
13.00

7.00

10.00

- ☐ Work on the notion of "past" and "to".

In order to avoid unnecessary confusion about the movement of the hands, use a geared clock. Also avoid using simplistic statements such as "When the big hand is at six and the small one at two it is half-past two". Make it obvious that the small hand is travelling and has reached a point mid-way between two and three.

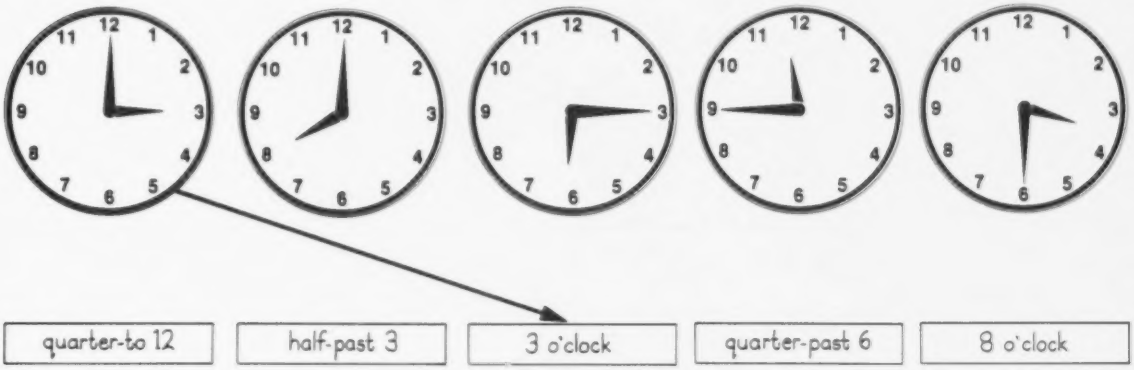



- ☐ Where will the hands be at twenty past six? ten to eight?
  twenty past ten? five to two? etc.

□ What times do these clocks show?

## Matching pairs

□ Ask the student to draw a line between the times that correspond to each other.




This matching exercise can be done with digital equivalents, if appropriate.

## Time-telling game

(similar to Bingo)

□ Make large cards — 1 for each player, divided into 6 equal sections.

The caller has six small cards (equal in size to the sections) for each player matching the times shown on the large card.

The large card shows clock faces.

The small cards show clock faces on one side and written times on the reverse.

The game can be made progressively more difficult by **calling** the time in more complicated ways.

Students can work in teams of two or three to a large card at first and progress to working individually.

Introducing a time limit can encourage attention and avoid boring gaps between calls. Unclaimed cards would then be returned to the bottom of the pile.

□ You can also make and play clock dominoes.

## AM and PM

By using am/pm we make it clear what time of day we are referring to, and this can be practised using everyday situations, e.g.

### OPENING TIMES

**Indian Restaurant**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Monday | 11 am | — | 1 pm |
| Tuesday | 4 pm | — | 6 pm |
| Wednesday | 8 pm | — | 11 pm |
| Thursday | 11 am | — | 1 pm |
| Friday | 11 am | — | 1 pm |
| | 8 pm | — | 11 pm |
| Saturday | 4 pm | — | 11 pm |

- When can I have curry for my mid-day meal?
- When can I have curry for supper?

**Off Licence**

Monday to Saturday
11 am - 3 pm
6 pm - 10 pm

Sunday
12 am - 2 pm
7 pm - 10 pm

**Doctor's Surgery**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Monday | 9 am | — | 11 am |
| | 4 pm | — | 6 pm |
| Tuesday | 2 pm | — | 4 pm |
| Wednesday | 9 am | — | 11 am |
| | 5 pm | — | 7 pm |
| Thursday | 8 am | — | 10 am |
| | 4 pm | — | 6 pm |
| Friday | 9 am | — | 11 am |
| | 5 pm | — | 7 pm |
| Saturday | 9 am | — | 12 am |

Students can work together to produce questions to ask relating to time tables like those shown above.

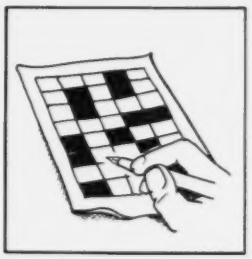
### Duration of time

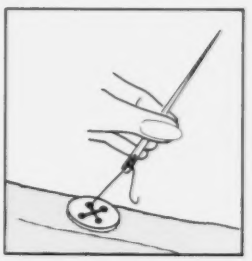
Introduce a number of experiences to help students build a concept of the duration of time. Time activities with a clock which incorporates a second hand, e.g.

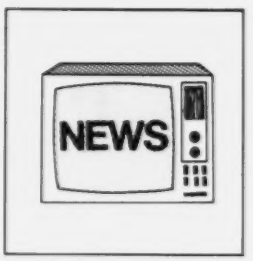
- Pass a pencil from hand to hand round the group.
- Pass a cup which is full of water round the group without spilling.
- Compare the two — ask which took longer.
- Bring an alarm clock or timer into the group and set it to go off as specified intervals.
- Measure the comparative times taken to perform certain tasks.
- Ask relevant questions to encourage the use of words associated with speed — quicker, slowly, etc.
- Using an egg timer ask students to estimate how many times a task can be repeated before the sand runs out. Then check who is most nearly right.

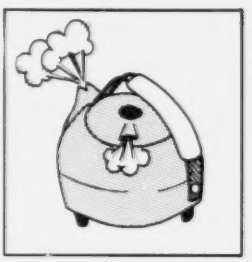
- **Make a series of action pictures and use them to discuss which takes the longest or shortest time.** Mount the pictures on card, and decide on the time duration for each one — they can then be used as the basis of guessing games
- Progress through discussion to sequencing, using the action cards. Start with two cards then all of them, putting them in order according to time duration.

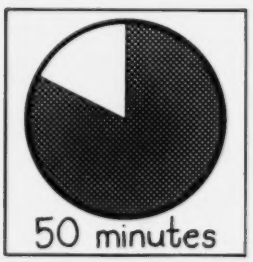
Students could make a set of cards based on timed activities carried out within the group, or based on everyday activities related to getting up, meals, watching television, etc.

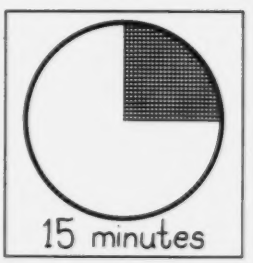


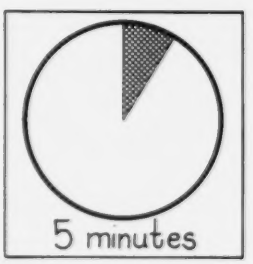









- Use action pictures (preferably the students' own photographs or from magazines) and discussion to build students' vocabulary, e.g. a *long* time, a *quick* walker, it takes *longer* to knit a jumper than to make the dinner.
- Make a record of one week's activities, using a circular format to show the cycle of time over a week. It is not as important at this stage that the students should be able to read the days of the week as that they should understand the sequencing of events.

## Discussion about time

- Introduce regular discussion periods about past, present and future events both general and personal, gradually extending the vocabulary associated with special times, e.g. day, night, morning, afternoon, evening, dinnertime, bedtime. Use verbal and pictorial accounts of the cycle of the day.
- Give students practice in using time-words such as: — when, before, after, nearly, next, etc.

  "When do you have your breakfast?"

  *"First,* fill the kettle with water, *then* plug it in and switch it on."

  *"While* it is boiling set the table."
- Use every opportunity to make incidental references to minutes, hours, days, months, year, etc to help students grow more aware of the time factor in everyday life.

## Practice through writing

Simple writing activities can be introduced as reinforcement. For example:

- The session starts at 6 o'clock.

  The session ends in two hours.

  It will be.....o'clock.

- I went into the cinema at 7.30 pm

  The show lasted three hours

  I came out at.....

- The train left at 3 pm

  It arrived at 5 pm

  The journey took.....hours.

- The bus leaves at 9.30 am

  It takes me 15 minutes to walk to the bus stop

  I must leave home at.....am.

- Today is Tuesday the fifth of June

  Yesterday it was.....

  Tomorrow will be.....

  We meet again in one week's time

  Then it will be.....

- This month is June

  Last month was.....

  Next month is.....

- Karen's birthday is in September

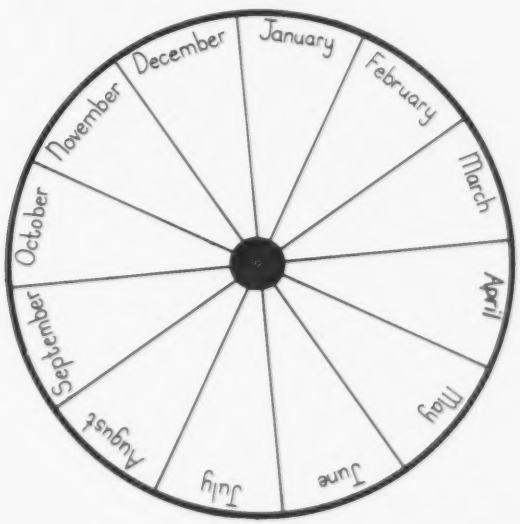
  She will have to wait.....months until her birthday.

## Using calendars

- ☐ Use calendars to introduce the idea of seasons, associating them with the weather, etc, to reinforce the idea of the cycle of the year.
- ☐ Relate events to seasons, create group and individual flow charts of the year using actual ,photographs where possible, e.g. Christmas party, summer holiday, bonfire night.
- ☐ Introduce names of the months. Associate months with the seasons, with birthdates, etc.
- ☐ Make a record of friends' birthdays.

| JAN | FEB | MARCH | APRIL |
|---|---|---|---|
| Karen | Hazel<br>Roger | Terry<br>Brian<br>Ann | Colin |

- ☐ Mark them on the calendar.
- ☐ Make a note of special days and birthdays in a diary.
- ☐ Draw up a Birthday Chart.



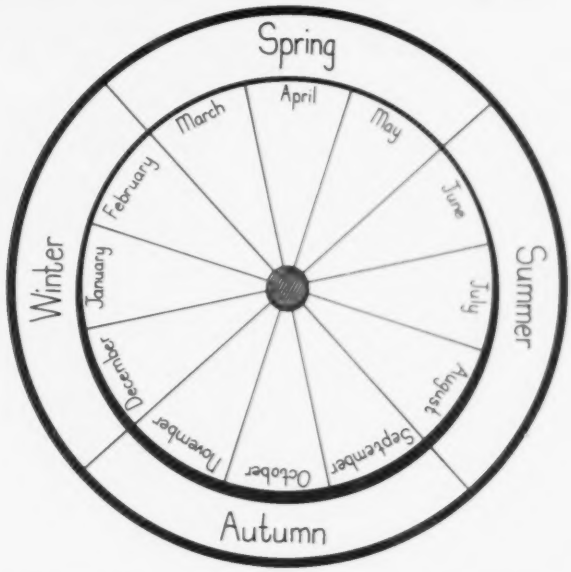

- ☐ Make full use of a chart such as the above by extension exercises:

  January is a ..... month (cold, warm)

  August is a ..... month (cold, warm)

  On the chart, colour the cold months blue, the warm months red.
- ☐ Write your name on the month when you have your birthday.
- ☐ Draw a Christmas tree on the Christmas month.
- ☐ Draw a firework on the month when we have bonfire night, etc.

- [ ] **Make a calendar of the seasons, using two circles of different diameter, joined by a pin.**




- [ ] Match seasons to months (inner circle rotates within outer circle on a pin).
- [ ] Use this to discuss events associated with the Seasons:

In Spring .....

In Summer .....

In Autumn .....

In Winter .....

## Reading and writing

Once the student is familiar with the concept of time, you may wish to move on to further reading and writing by, for example:

- [ ] practising writing notes
- [ ] making appointments
- [ ] keeping a diary
- [ ] other writing exercises involving time
- [ ] free writing associated with time, seasons, etc.

# COMMUNICATION SKILLS

PRACTISING NAMES AND ADDRESSES

DEVELOPING SOCIAL SIGHT VOCABULARY

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION

DEVELOPING WRITING

# PRACTISING NAMES AND ADDRESSES

Constant practice of basic skills like writing names and addresses can be demoralising for both tutor and student when frequent revision is necessary; it helps therefore to combine practice of the skills with as many and as varied other activities as possible. Lots of opportunities for writing names and addresses can come up naturally in the course of a lesson — signing and sending Birthday, Christmas and Get Well cards, opportunities to send thank you letters and sign petitions. Don't fall into the habit of doing things for students which they could do for themselves.

Here are some suggestions for practising names and addresses:

- Collect a variety of **writing instruments** — different felt tips and magic markers, chalk, wax crayons, brushes and different grades of pencils — and let the students write their names with each one. Apart from practising the skill you should get a lot of conversation about colour preferences and prices, the students will be able to experience the feel of the different instruments and it should help co-ordination. You could produce a "Which" report of what people like to write with best.

- **Labelling possessions** — use different types of labels to label possessions appropriately — make name tapes for clothes, luggage labels for cases, use Dynotape or freezer labels for sandwich boxes. The group could also design personal labels for their books, or record sleeves or nameplates for their bedroom doors.

- Try out **different ways of spelling** out names and addresses by using Letraset, Scrabble, magnetic letters or lettering stencils. Make a collage with letters cut out from newspapers. Try using invisible ink and addressing secret letters to each other.

- Encourage students to **recognise their names and addresses** by looking for them on some of the following:— telephone directory, class register, birth certificate, medical form, wage packet, post office book (some of these might need parental co-operation). Look up christian names in a book about choosing names for babies and find out if they have special meanings.

- **Talk about forms** and collect examples of all the different forms we have to fill in. Discuss why we have to fill them in — what is the information used for? Although the students may not be able to cope with filling in most of the forms, encourage them to look for the parts asking for name and address and signature. Talk about the importance of not signing things you don't understand.

- When making **wall charts and displays** for the classroom try to incorporate the students' names when you can — ideas could include a birthday or birth sign chart or rotas for making coffee.

- Pin a **map** of your town or district on the notice board and using coloured string or ribbon, stretch it from the place where each student lives to a label with his or her name and address on it.

- Talk about **initials** — using fabric paints initial a handkerchief, mould your initials in self hardening clay or design a piece of jewellery with an initial on it.

- Talk about **identification** — see if any of the class wears an identity bracelet or an SOS Talisman and discuss their function. Design identity bracelets for the class.

- Make a game like **flounders** — cut out small slips of cardboard with words from the students' names and addresses on them. Slip a paper clip into each piece of card and let the students take it in turns to fish for them with a magnet at the end of a makeshift fishing rod. The first to catch and assemble their own address wins. Any wrong catches get thrown back into the pool. (You must ensure that the names and addresses fit on to an equal number of cards). This game can be extended to telephone numbers with each digit on a separate card.



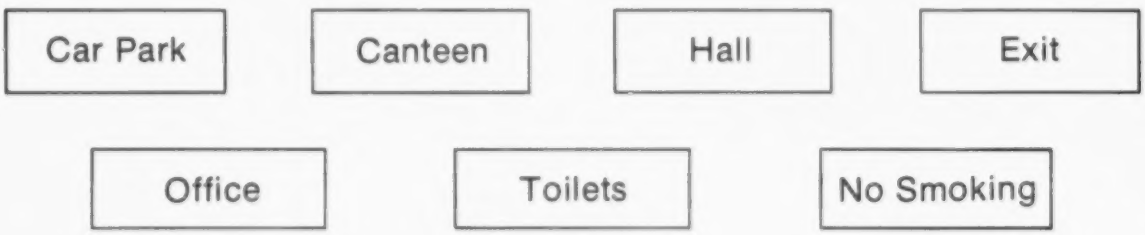
39

# DEVELOPING SOCIAL SIGHT VOCABULARY

When students are learning social sight vocabulary, it is important to take a few words at a time and put them into context so that they will recognise them when they see them outside the classroom. You could for instance teach the sign FIRE EXIT by looking around the building you are in and noting all the fire exits and any fire hydrants or fire buckets, then practising a fire drill. This gives meaning to the sign and could lead to a more general consideration of fires and fire hazards.

There are other ways of exploiting the immediate environment in which you hold your class:

- The students could make social sight signs and then look around the building to find others like them.
- You could prepare a quiz or checklist based on signs in the building which the students then have to find.
- You could make a plan or map of the building on a large sheet of paper and make signs to put on it in appropriate places.




- Students could imagine they are complete strangers to the building and do a survey to see if there are enough signs to show people where to go. If not, they might with to discuss what could be done about it.

Wherever possible encourage students to go out and look at social sight signs. Take them for a walk to look at signs on doors, sign posts, names of streets, etc.

- If you can take a camera with you and photograph them, you will have a resource more relevant and valuable than many published materials.
- You can also make a quiz (rather as you would in a car rally) and send students out in pairs or small groups with a volunteer to look for signs. The quiz could follow a theme e.g. looking for things to do with time (opening times of shops, banks, etc), money (prices, special offers), transport (follow the directions to the local bus station and find out certain information), or could incorporate small items to be brought back to the classroom.

Card games can include social sight words (bingo, pairs, pelmanism, snap). Many social sight words group into pairs that are similar in meaning (caution/danger, entrance/way in, toilets/conveniences), or are opposites (entrance/exit, way in/way out, open/closed), so a variety of games can be made up related to grouping them in those ways — either card games or drama games where students are given cards with words on and have to find partners with similar (or contrasting) signs.

- Make up stories incorporating social sight words to be read to the students out loud, stopping when you come to a relevant word. Students could either shout out or select the word they think it should be from a group of words in front of them, e.g.

"Andrew wanted to find out the time of a bus so he want to the .....to ask.

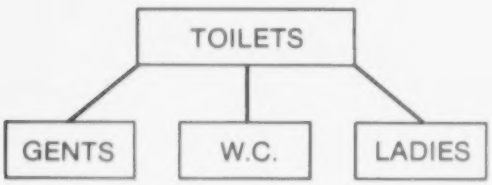
When he got there he didn't know where to go, but he saw the sign that said .....

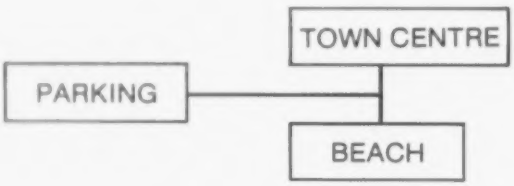
and went to the door marked .....

The lady there said he could get the bus he wanted at the ..... near his house."

| bus station | enquiries | information | bus stop |
|---|---|---|---|

- Use the social sight words you have learnt to make displays for the classroom: make a mobile, a sign post for the wall, or a collage with the signs.




- If you want the students to recognise the names of local streets, towns or places ask them to bring to the class as many examples as possible of things with the words you are looking for written on. The name of your town could be found in the local paper, on adverts for shops, on library tickets, on maps, on any publicity magazine, even on paper bags from shops.

What is important when teaching social sight words is to encourage students to look in their own environment rather than learn stale lists of words that do not have much relevance to every day life.



41

# DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION

Many mentally handicapped adults may not have been able to benefit from the full range of social interaction to which most of us are exposed — such as taking part in groups, clubs or classes, meeting people socially and at work, expressing views, sharing experiences and knowledge, etc.

This section offers a few ideas for stimulating the development of communication skills, from listening and talking to expressing ideas through drama, on paper or through other materials.

## Listening Skills

There are a number of ways to practise listening which may help mentally handicapped adults to be more aware of their surroundings as well as to cope better in the conversations they have. Here are a few suggestions:

- ☐ Everybody listens to a story (or an article read from a newspaper). They then answer questions on it or give opinions about it.
- ☐ Everybody closes their eyes and keeps very quiet and listens to sounds in the room and outside. One person deliberately makes a noise (e.g. rustles papers, clinks spoons, etc) whilst the others identify the sound. This can be varied by using a tape of sound effects (creaking doors, dripping taps, etc) and asking the group to identify them.
- ☐ Listen to a tape (or sections of a tape) taken from radio plays. Try to describe or guess the mood or emotions of the people talking (happy, sad, angry, etc).
- ☐ Listen to a piece of music with eyes closed. Ask the students to try to describe what it makes them think about.
- ☐ Everybody talks about sounds they like and sounds they hate or that irritate them. Do the same with the other senses (sight, touch, taste, smell) and talk about what is pleasant and unpleasant.
- ☐ There are a variety of listening games which can be played using telephones as props — giving and taking messages, giving people good or sad news and listening to their reactions, making appointments at the doctors, etc, ringing up shops for information.

## Encouraging Talking

If you have coffee in the classroom, it is an ideal time to encourage discussion and conversation. If not, build time into the session at some point. You can use the time to talk about what you have been doing in the class and to make plans for future events, to exchange news, to congratulate someone who has had a birthday, to commiserate about bad news. You could also try to use some of the ideas below to encourage conversation and self-expression. It is probably better to encourage everybody to join in, rather than ask one person to do all the talking.

- ☐ **Conversation topics** can be introduced to get people started, e.g.
  - Foods I dislike/like.
  - Drinks I dislike/like.
  - My saddest/happiest moment.
  - The job I would like/hate.



42

- My favourite/most disliked TV programme or advertisement.
- Moans — what makes me mad.
- What I would do with £1,000.
- What gift I would choose for (name somebody in the group) and why . . .

- You could also encourage the students to talk about and show the group a book they have enjoyed or to take it in turns to tell a joke each week or choose one from a book.

- Play **Kim's Game** (a memory game). Put 15 items on a tray — the group concentrates on looking at them for a minute — then the tray is taken away. They try to recall as many of the items as possible.

- Try **miming actions.** Make the actions as clear as possible so that anybody watching would know what you are doing — some ideas to start with are: typing, sharpening a pencil, eating different types of food, sewing, writing, brushing teeth, cleaning shoes, etc.

- Have a selection of **props** (hats, scarves, glasses, bags, etc) which students try on and talk about the people who would wear them. Give the characters suggested a name, job, etc, and make up a story behind the character and the prop, e.g. a hat could have been bought for a wedding, sunglasses for a holiday. This can be varied in a number of ways, for example to create stories or situations around a number of varied props, e.g. a whistle, a doll, some knitting, and a bus ticket.

- Make **lists** based on certain categories. The group tries to name as many items as possible from a given category, e.g. names, meals, countries, parts of the body, etc. This can also be played as **word tennis** — two people name items from the given category in turn until one of them falters. He or she is then out and somebody else challenges the winner.

## Using Drama

- Real-life situations can be used as a basis for acting out or role-play. Choose situations that may need practice for everyday life, such as going shopping, visiting the dentist, catching a bus or making an appointment.

- Social situations can be created and acted out, for example focussing on
  - relationships within the family (between brother and sister, father and son, etc)
  - relationships with friends (sharing experiences, having disagreements, etc)
  - meeting strangers.

- Different stimuli can be used to encourage the imagination, for example a piece of music, a picture, a TV programme. These may lead to expressive work using mime or story telling.

- "Drama" or action games can be used. Here is one example:

### *Object memory game:*

Everyone stands or sits in a circle and passes around an object, concentrating on its properties especially its size, weight and surface texture. When it has been all the way round the circle, the tutor puts it on the floor and picks up a mimed or imaginary version of the object which is then passed around. The group has to concentrate on remembering what it felt like to pass around the real object. They can then go on to describe how it felt, or draw the object, or write about it.

## Art and Craft

Art or craftwork can be introduced as a stimulus to self-expression, as a prelude to writing, or to provide illustrative material for written work. Here are a few suggestions — they may not all be possible but they may give you some ideas that you can develop.

- If you can, introduce a range of paints and brushes (including large house-painting brushes), and start painting — using lots of discussion about what is being done, about colours, size, shape, feelings, etc. If paint is not possible, students can achieve attractive "smudgy" pictures with pastels ("craypas") and with a selection of felt pens of varying thickness and luminosity.

  Other variations include:

### *Free painting*

This can be the most satisfying as it is the least contrived and least constricting. Students can choose to try portraiture, landscape, or abstracts.

### *Printing*

There are lots of methods which give professional results that are highly satisfying to student and tutor, for example, simple butterfly prints, corks, lids, leaves, etc.

### *Sketching*

This is particularly enjoyable if you go out as a group, armed with boards, pencils and rubbers. Anywhere will do — a disused railway, the town centre, or just outside the building you are in. Results can be used to illustrate or stimulate writing.

### *Collage*

This can be a useful group activity, offering something for everyone to do.

### *Other materials*

Tissue, glue, sticky paper, string — and lots of other things — can be used to interesting effect. If it is possible, the group might like to try working with wood, fabric or clay. There may be an adult education class which students could join — and bring back their experience to the group.

## Music

Music may be an important part of some students' lives and could be used to develop other work. For example:

- Ask students about their own preferences, favourite pieces of music, etc, and compile a top ten chart.
- Introduce different kinds of music, especially mood music, and use this as a stimulus for discussion on emotions — spooky (e.g. Hall of the Mountain King), fearful, happy, sad, loving. This can be used as a stimulus for drama, writing or poetry.
- Bring in instruments such as guitar, recorder, banjo, etc, and compose a song (words and music) in the group.



44

# DEVELOPING WRITING

The positive aspects of developing student writing are now generally appreciated in adult literacy work — although it is sometimes an aspect which is neglected when working with mentally handicapped adults. The process of developing writing can be particularly important to the mentally handicapped student, bringing as it does a whole range of skills — talking, exchanging ideas, making choices, selecting the material, choosing the typeface, illustrations, etc.

Developing a piece of writing is a tremendous aid to communication. The value lies not only in the piece of writing itself, but also in the process of creating it. It encourages the student to think clearly, to learn to express ideas in sequence, to talk in sentences rather than fragmented phrases and to talk about opinions or experiences. Many mentally handicapped adults may not conquer the skills of spelling or punctuation. Some may find it difficult to copy out their own work. This is not important. However, with the tutor acting as scribe and encouraging students to concentrate on what is of most value, they should be able to express what they want to say.

Start off by **talking.** You will need to establish what you are going to write about. Almost anything can act at a stimulus — a piece of writing by somebody else, a poem or extract from a book, a piece of music or picture, or best of all, something from the student's own experience that would be of interest to the group. As you talk, the tutor jots down the student's ideas (or records them if they are coming thick and fast) even if they are only odd words and phrases rather than complete sentences.

After a time the tutor reads his jottings back to the student who decides what to write about and dictates his ideas to the tutor. They may not be very fluent at this stage and the tutor may have to prompt with suggestions and open-ended questions and also give some idea of sequence — "What happened first? What about . . ? How did you feel? What came next?" It is a delicate task as it is the student's words that are important and they are what the tutor must write down. The piece may have to be reshaped and re-read many times before the student is satisfied and the tutor must ensure that the main aim, i.e. communicating to other people, is never lost sight of.

The group visited a sports centre and Pete was so impressed he went back again to try weight lifting. He came to the group complaining his stomach muscles ached and decided to write about it.

Pete tends to talk in broken phrases and you sometimes have to guess at his meaning.

"My guts hurt"

"From the weight lifting?"

"Yeah"

"Do the muscles hurt?"

"Do they! Did it a couple of times" (with pride)

(later)

"He was good"

"Who?"

"The bloke"

"Which bloke? Who was he?"

"The teacher — whatever you call him?"

"Fit"

"He was very fit, was he?"

"Yeah. Fit. Didn't hurt him."

This is the finished piece after Pete had revised it. He also added an introductory sentence.

"We went to the community centre for a sports evening. I went a couple of times to the weight lifting — my muscles did they hurt the next day! The instructor must be very fit. He finds it very easy."

After choosing what to say, make a fair copy for typing. Discuss a title. Decide how you want to use the piece — you can use it first as reading material for the group: as it contains their own ideas and vocabulary it is of especial interest to them. A magazine of student writing illustrated by their own drawings or line drawings cut from newspapers and magazines is also invaluable. If that is impossible try to gather the writing into a file or scrapbook or display it on the wall. It is important to show by the way you use it that you value the piece of work.

Writing can also be done as a group — writing sentences on the blackboard, reading them over and revising them. Or students in pairs could each write on a particular aspect of an activity, e.g. a visit out (somebody could write a sentence or two about the journey, somebody else about what they did).

The passage below reflects the pleasure and interest created for a group from an adult training centre by producing their own magazine. This passage was written as a group activity and took some time to produce, with everybody contributing their ideas.

"News and Views" is our magazine. It started in summer 1981 when we chose the name by putting our suggestions in a ballot box, then having a vote on the best five.

We talk over what we want to say and a volunteer tutor writes it down. Then we go over it together so that it sounds right and to make sure it is just what we want to say. We have written news items like a volunteer tutor Diane, who had a baby and how we made a cardigan for her. Also we have written controversial pieces like being called mentally handicapped. We write about visits like the trip to the library because we enjoyed it. We select jokes for the magazine and write our own crosswords. We have our own words in it in puzzles so that we can learn them. We take the magazine home to do the work in it, like a money page or questions on trips, or work we have done on towns the netball team has been to. Our parents like to see the magazine and help us with the quizzes and read the news.

We draw our covers and then choose the best for the magazine. So far we have had Bugs Bunny, Ships and a Keep Fit scene.

When we have collected all our work together we take it to the secretary. Sheila types up the writing on a large print typewriter and chooses a picture for each item, she makes our magazine look very stylish. It is duplicated at the College.

It is brilliant because everyone gets a turn of writing for it."



46

# USING GAMES

# USING GAMES

Games of all types can be an important part of learning particularly as they can be the basis of a group session or used to reinforce what has gone before.

There is also a good case to be made for a lively active game to release pent up energy at the end of a period of concentration.

A lot can be learned from observing students' reactions to problems encountered in games — sometimes unexpected skills will emerge, at other times, areas of difficulty.

Most of the games that follow can be adapted to suit a variety of purposes. In fact it is likely that a game can be made up for almost any learning requirement.

## Card Games

Alphabet based games (like Lexicon or Sylabex) are extremely useful and traditional family games like "Snap" or "Happy Families" may be quite fresh or new to some students or can be adapted to suit different themes. It is also possible to buy blank cards (from Waddingtons) which can save a lot of trouble. Here are a few ideas for card games:

### *Matching Snap*

Pairs of objects, usually associated together, e.g. "cup and saucer", "knife and fork", etc.

These could be drawn on the cards or cut out from a magazine or catalogue and stuck on.

### *Word Snap*

With advanced students just the written words could be used, as in using pairs of matching social sight words, or any pairs of words being learned.

### *Alphabet Snap*

Matching capital letters or matching capitals to lower case letters.

### *Money Snap*

Matching cards showing coins of similar denominations or in groups of equivalent value.

### *Number Snap*

Matching pairs of numbers (either written or in collections of dots, like dominoes).

### *Happy Families*

Can be made and played using a number of variations. For example:

### *Animal Families*

Groups such as the cat family — lion, tiger, leopard, puma. The dog family — wolf, jackal, etc.

### *National Families*

Cut out from National Geographical magazines or bought from Oxfam shops.

## *Object Families*

Domestic pictures of kitchen utensils, objects from bedroom, garage, garden, etc, cut from catalogues or brochures.

## *Pelmanism*

Can be played with practically anything: social sight words, picture matching or picture/word matching, numbers, shapes, etc.

## Word Games

These are some examples to which you can add:

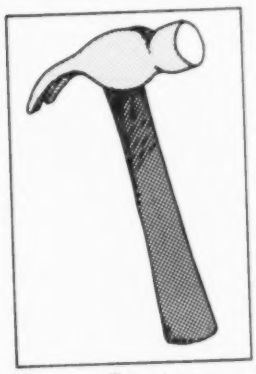
## *Matching Game*

Requires a pack of word cards and a pack of matching picture cards. Deal out word cards to players. Put the pack of picture cards face down, in the centre of the table. Players take it in turn to pick up the top card from the centre and see if it matches any of their hand of word cards. If it does, the matched pair are placed face up in front of the player. If not, the card is replaced at the bottom of the pack. The first one to match all their words to pictures wins.

## *Pairs*

Cards can be made by students, using cut out magazine pictures, or just the words . . .

Pairs can be made up as follows:

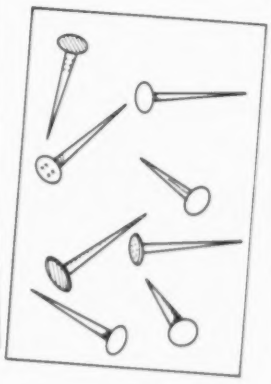


*Food:*

Ham and eggs

Fish and chips

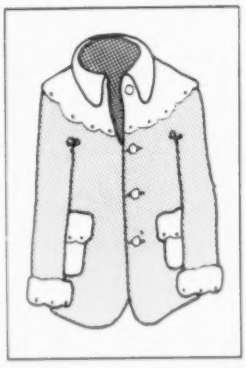
Hot and cold

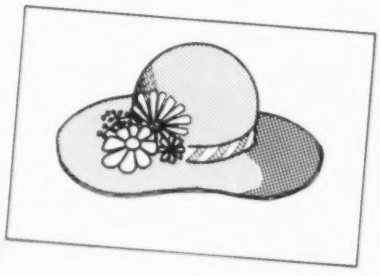


*People:*

Morecombe and Wise

Starsky and Hutch





*Pubs:*

Pig and Whistle

Rose and Crown

and so on . . .

Separate the pairs into 2 packs — place each pack face up on tables as far apart as practicable — players dash from one table to another, making up pairs. (This can be played more quietly as Pelmanism).

## *Beginnings and Endings Game*

(adding suffixes and prefixes to words)

Deal players a hand of "beginning" and "ending" cards. From the stack of "word" cards in the centre of the table, turn up the first word. Players in turn try to "change" the word by adding to it from their hand. As one word is added to, another is turned up. The first player to use all their cards in this way wins.

### *Fish*

Deal each player 7 word cards, stack the rest in the centre. Players in turn ask the person next to them if they have a card to match the sound of one of their cards. (The words used can be according to the students needs). If the requested card is not produced, the player picks up a card from the centre pack and awaits next turn. The winner is the person with the most sets of four (matching sound cards).

### *Alphabet Game*

Deal out all the alphabet cards to the players. Players take it in turn to add one card to form the alphabet in the centre of the table.

A player without the next card needed misses a turn.

### *Bingo*

This has endless possibilities and can be used to reinforce learning of social sight words, street and place names, numbers, money, shapes, colours, etc.

### *I Spy*

Apart from being a word game, it can also be played with colours instead of initials, for less able students.

### *Words and Pictures*

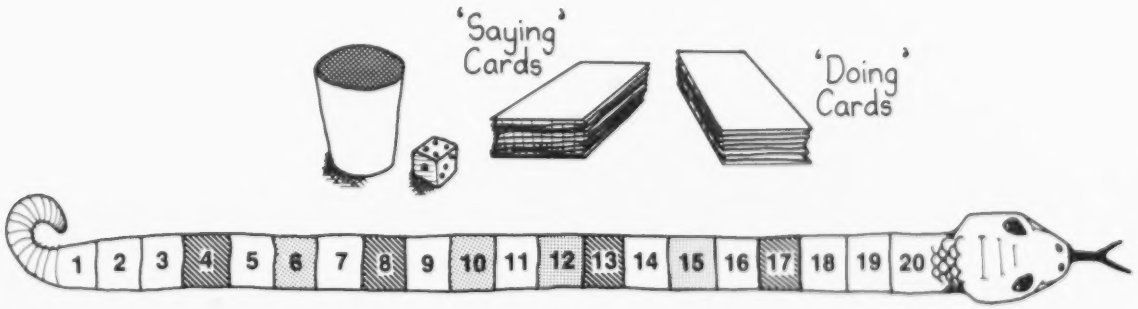
Cut unusual pictures from magazines or newspapers and stick on to card. Show them one by one to the group. Students each write a word or phrase about each picture on a small piece of paper, which is then thrown on to a pile in the middle of the table. When this has been done, set all the pictures out along the edge of the table, each student (or student/tutor pair) then picks up a scrap, reads it, and places it on the picture they think most appropriate. Eventually each picture will have a pile of words on it. Each student could then choose a picture and take it off to work on, perhaps using the collection of words that go with it.

## Board Games

Traditional family board games give enjoyable practice in useful skills. A valuable opportunity for discussion and group inter-action can also be gained from planning and making a board game as a group.

### *Snake*

This is easy to make and useful for a large group, as all can see it and reach at least one part of it. Cut out a snake, as long as your table and about 4 inches wide, from card or stiff paper. Mark it off in numbered sections (students could colour these). Some of the sections should be marked "Pick



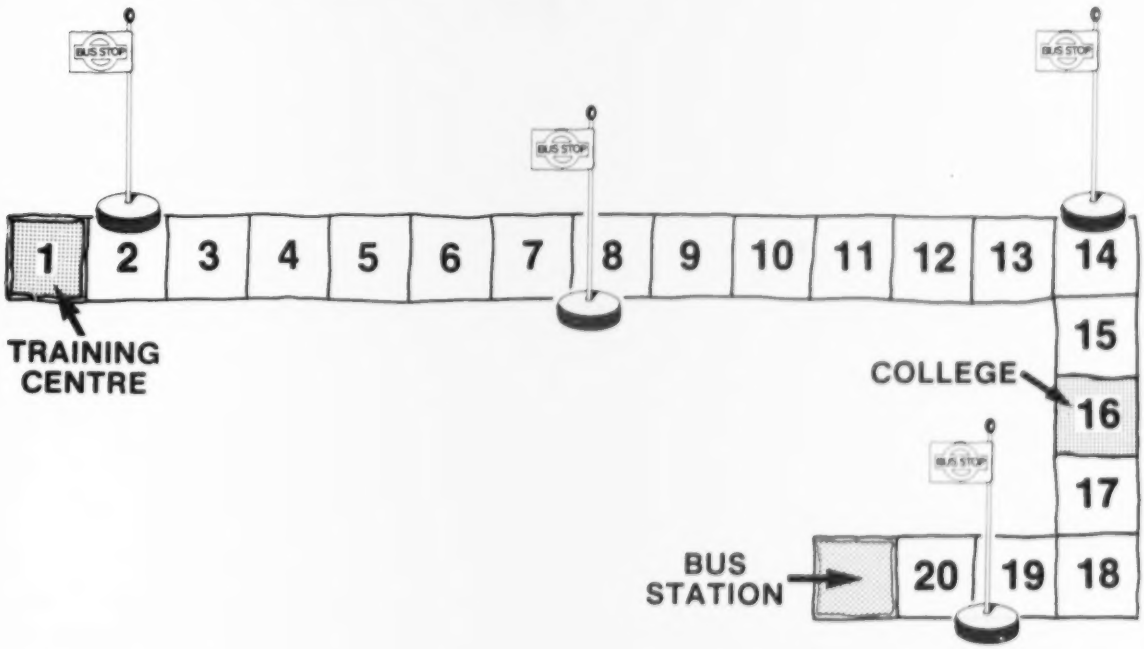
Up A Card". Players throw a dice and move along the snake accordingly. If they have to pick up a card, they can choose a "Doing" or "Saying" card. These cards can be instructions to "Do" or "Say" anything decided by students beforehand, or by the tutor in relation to previous work, e.g. "Say — How many chairs are in this room". "Do — 6 press-ups". The first player to reach the snake's head wins.

## *Coming to College*

This is similar to "Snake" being a long sectioned strip, 4 inches wide along which counters are moved at the throw of a dice. The aim is to "travel" safely from the Training Centre bus stop to the College bus stop without overshooting to the Bus Station at the end of the route. Any player landing on a "bus stop" square has another throw. Local street names can be used and the position of bus stops and instructions on some squares can be decided by the group,
e.g. "Lose Bus Pass — go back two squares"

"Forgot to Ring Bell — go on to bus station"

"Give up seat to old lady — have another throw"




## *Village Game*

Make a board to represent your town, village or shopping centre with alternate blue and yellow squares. Discuss with students which shops and services to include.

Make 2 sets of cards, blue for shops, yellow for services, each one having a task written on it, e.g.:

Shop card 'Buy a loaf of bread — 38p'

Services card 'Library book overdue, take it back and pay fine — 16p'

Provide money in dish or ashtray

Players move counters (or buttons) along squares to the throw of dice. Cards are picked up according to the colour of squares landed on, and the move made to the service or shop directed. When the next turn comes around, pick up money from the dish, count out the correct amount and place it in the correct shop.

Throw the dice to move on.

There is not necessarily a winner, but to end the game you could say that the first to reach the Bus Station wins.



51

## *Spending Money Game*

Make a board with squares around the edge.

Put directions on some squares such as:

'Go to Cinema — £1.50'
'Travel by Bus — fare 50p'
'Lucky Card'
'Chance Card'

Each player has a selection of coins to a total of £2 (according to ability).

Players take it in turn to throw dice and move their counter clock-wise around the board.

The Lucky Cards *add* to player's money:
'Earn 75p for washing car'
'Find 50p in street'

and Chance Cards *subtract* from it:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Sister's birthday: | buy card | 15p |
| | stamp | 16p |
| | | 31p |

Make rules to suit the time available:
either 1. Continue playing until only one player has money left,
or 2. Limit game to a particular number of rounds.

## Games on TV

These are based on games seen on television and have the advantage that students are likely to know the rules already.

### *"Passwords"*

One player has to guess a word held on a card behind his head.

The other players to give *one word clues.*

### *"Guessing"*

Place a cardboard box on its side with the opening facing the "audience". Make a "hole" in the top big enough to put a hand through. A series of objects are placed in the box and the players take turn to guess what they are.

### *"Higher or Lower"*

(from the Bruce Forsyth game 'Play Your Cards Right')

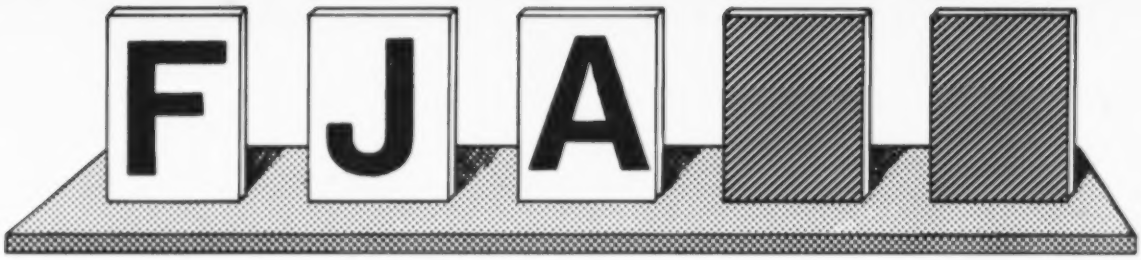
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Either pin up the alphabet strip, or write it on a blackboard.

Make large (9in x 6in) alphabet cards, prop them up in sight of all, under the alphabet strip, one facing out, the others facing in. Player has to guess whether the next card turned over will show a letter higher up or lower down the alphabet. It is a popular game and helps with indexing.



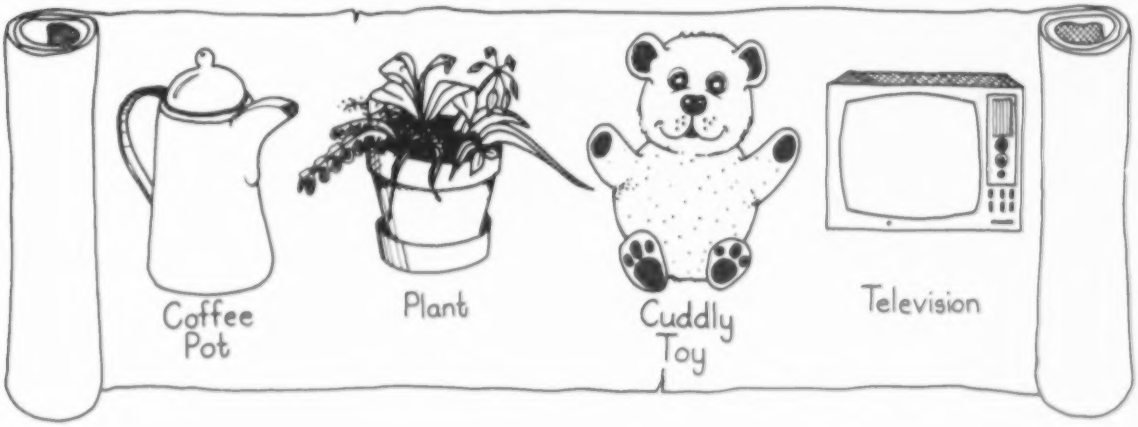
52




## *"Memory Game"*

(based on the Generation Game)

Draw in thick felt pen (or cut out from magazines and stick on) about 20 objects on a length of wallpaper — slowly unroll it to simulate objects moving past on a conveyor belt, naming the objects together as they appear. Roll up the paper and see how many of the group can remember (saying the list or writing it down according to ability).






53

# RESOURCES

## *General background*

Teaching Language and Communication to the Mentally Handicapped, Ken Leeming, Will Swann, Judith Coupe and Peter Mittler, Schools Council Curriculum Bulletin 8.

Accident of Birth, Fred Heddell, BBC Publications.

Politics of Mental Handicap, Ryan and Thomas, Pelican Books.

Education Needs of Mentally Handicapped Adults, Edited by P.J. Mittler and S.G. Gittens, National Society for Mentally Handicapped Adults, June 1974.

Special Educational Needs: Report to the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People, Mary Warnock, HMSO May 1978.

Meeting Special Educational Needs, Mary Warnock (brief guide to the full report), HMSO 1978.

Moving Ahead — A Handbook for Tutors, Scottish Adult Basic Education Unit, Atholl House, 2 Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EG.

## *Catalogues, Publications lists etc, may be obtained from:*

British Institute of Mental Handicap Publications, Wolverhampton Road, Kidderminster, Worcestershire.

Human Horizon Series (Catalogue) (e.g. "Learning to Cope" by Whelan and Speake), Souvenir Press, 34 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PA. Trade Orders: Tiptree Book Services, Tiptree, Colchester, Essex.

National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults (Catalogue of Books on Mental Retardation), Mencap National Centre, 117 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT.

Eurospan (Special Education), 3 Henrietta Street, London WC2E 8LU.

National Council for Special Education, (Publications), 1 Wood Street, Statford-upon-Avon CV37 6JE.

## *Teaching Aids*

Games and materials for concept and language development, pre-reading skills etc: LDA (Learning Development Aids), Duke Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 2AX.

Pre-reading and numeracy aids including coin dice and stamps: Taskmaster BLM Ltd, Morris Road, Leicester LE2 6BR.

Reading, numeracy and concept development aids: Philips and Tacey Ltd., Andover, Hants.

"Rainbow Cards" — coloured blank playing cards, available in boxes of 1,000 from Waddingtons, Wakefield Road, Leeds LS10 3TP.

## *Background reading on Numeracy*

Step by small step — A Structured Approach to Pre-number work, Brian Robbins, LDA Park Works, Norwich Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 2AX.

Functional Mathematics for Mentally Retarded, D.L. Peterson, Merrill 1973.

Teaching Mathematics for Slow Learners, A. Duncan, Ward Lock.

## *ALBSU Publications*

A full list is available from the Unit. However, the following publications may be of particular interest.

An Introduction to Numeracy Teaching, 1982, ALBSU. Price: 60p + p.p.

An Introduction to Literacy Teaching, 1982, ALBSU. Price: 60p + p.p.

Starting Points — an Ideas Pack for Literacy Tutors, 1979, ALBSU. Price: £2.00 + p.p.

Working with Numbers — Ideas and Examples for Numeracy Worksheets, 1982, ALBSU. Price: £2.75 + p.p.

Health — A Basic Education Pack, 1983, ALBSU. Price: £2.25 + p.p.

Available from

Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit,
Kingsbourne House, 229/231 High Holborn,
London WC1V 7DA.

Telephone: 01-405 4017

£1.50
plus postage and packing

ISBN 0 906509 36 X

ALBSU